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Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Proceeding **02-277**

Dear Commissioners,

In regard to your pending decision about the long-standing regulations pertaining to media ownership, I strenuously urge you to err on the side of caution, as inefficient as it may seem. As an economics major, I appreciate the theoretical arguments for consolidation. But as a father, citizen and consumer, I place infinitely greater value on a diversity of voices. Locally-owned broadcasters may not be able to invest in production capital on a level competitive with the conglomerates, but the core of good journalism is the human capital found in reporters and editors. As long as there are those willing to make the investment and commitment to running a lone broadcast station, it is incumbent upon the federal government, acting as agent on behalf of the public, to allocate the public airwaves in a manner which will facilitate the greatest range of public debate. This is essential to the health of democracy. In these days of portentous change, we must take every opportunity to defend the public sphere. The criteria that empirical evidence be shown to demonstrate the necessities of these protections is an arbitrary constraint contrary to common sense that may equally well be applied to any of our Constitutional Amendments.

Viacom, Disney, GE and AOL Time Warner chose to build their businesses in a society which has been committed to preserving the public's interest in its airwaves. If these conglomerates have encountered some "ceiling" to their expansion, it is not the role of the federal government to alter the playing field to accommodate their desires.

Very truly yours,

Chris Lynch